

St. Paul

St. George

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

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Record Center
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, DC 20590

Re: SP 14860-N

June 24, 2009

Dear Director Billings:

This letter is to express my strong support for the Department to grant approval of Special Permit application 14860-N in order that health care entities in Alaska will continue to have ready access to medical oxygen for patient care. Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association is concerned about the negative impact the proposed rule will have on the health of Alaskans in the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region if the permit is not granted. The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region is not connected to the road or rail system in Alaska and relies on air transportation for everything from food to medical oxygen. In fact, a large portion of the land mass of Alaska, 75% of the state, is not connected to the road or rail system, has limited barge access, and relies primarily on air transportation for the movement of goods, including medical oxygen.

The Special Permit would enable us to continue to receive oxygen and oxidizing gases as we have safely for years. Not granting the Special Permit would significantly increase the cost of oxygen – and worse – decrease the availability of oxygen in many communities. This is a significant public health concern well as a serious concern for the individual patients we serve.

We have patients that use oxygen when traveling and would not be able to without this Permit. For these reasons, I respectfully urge DOT to approve Special Permit application 14860-N.

Sincerely,



Dimitri Philemonof, President/CEO
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

cc: Carolyn Crowder, Health Director
Jessica Mata Rukovishnikoff, SPHC Administrator
Theodore L. Willke, PhD
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